REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 15, 2010. Claims 1 to 20 and 22 remain pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 20 and 22 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3 to 8, 10, 17 to 20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Publication No. 2001/0053247 (Sowinski), Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Sowinski in view of U.S. Publication No. 2001/0016820 (Tanaka), Claims 9 and 11 were rejected under § 103(a) over Sowinski in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,823,459 (Horikoshi), Claim 12 was rejected under § 103(a) over Sowinski in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0126322 (Kadowaki), and Claims 13 to 16 were rejected under § 103(a) over Sowinski in view of Japan 2002-312429 (Shinichi). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The claims relate to setting personalized information, which is associated with an ID of an identified operator of an image reading apparatus for performing various types of printing operations. When the operator is identified, personalized service information associated with the ID of the identified operator is acquired, where the personalized service information includes plural items of setting information for each of a plurality of external services. The, a setting screen, a setting procedure and contents of settings are personalized based on the acquired personalized service information, and when the operator selects a service, various settings that have been set based on the personalized setting information, together with generated digital image data that is generated by reading an original document, are transmitted to the selected service.

Referring specifically to the claims, Claim 1 is directed to an image reading apparatus arranged to connect, via a network, to a plurality of external services, each of which provides a service for processing image data generated in the image reading apparatus, the image reading apparatus comprising an image reading unit configured to read an image on an original document and generate digital image data corresponding to the read image, an identification unit configured to identify an operator of the image reading apparatus, an acquiring unit configured to acquire personalized service information which is associated with and ID of the identified operator, the personalized service information including plural items of setting information for each of the plurality of external services, a personalizing unit configured to personalize a setting screen, a setting procedure, and contents of settings according to the acquired personalized service information, and a transmitting unit configured to transmit various settings which have been set based on the setting screen, setting procedure, and contents of the settings personalized by said personalizing unit, together with the generated digital image data via the network to one of the plurality of external services which is selected by the identified operator.

Claims 20 and 22 are method and computer medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 1.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 20 and 22, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of an image reading apparatus i) identifying an operator of the image reading apparatus, ii) acquiring personalized service information which is associated with and ID of the identified operator, the personalized service

information including plural items of setting information for each of the plurality of external services, iii) personalizing a setting screen, a setting procedure, and contents of settings according to the acquired personalized service information, and iv) transmitting various settings which have been set based on the setting screen, setting procedure, and contents of the personalized settings, together with generated digital image data via a network to one of a plurality of external services which is selected by the identified operator.

Sowinski discloses a system for providing photofinishing services to a customer by scanning a film to produce digital images, displaying examples of various looks on a color display, receiving a customer's selection of a preferred look, and then applying the look to produce a processed image. Sowinski is merely seen to teach that a customer is identified based on a customer ID and password and that pre-built preference profiles are provided to the customer. The Office Action asserts that Sowinski discloses "for each of the plurality of external services (Fig. 6, paragraph 0061, for wholesale service #604 or retail service #607)." However, as to these services, Sowinski merely discloses that wholesale operations #604 distributes "PHOTONETWORK SERVICES" such as image processing, storage, Web display, or printing services, while a workstation 607 as a retail operation has input and output capabilities fulfilled by a keyboard and can communicate with wholesale operations 604 to provide the "PHOTONETWORK SERVICES" distributed from the wholesale operations to a customer who enters the login ID 902/password 904 thereon (see paragraph 0061 and 0125, Figs. 8 and 9). Namely, Sowinski does not disclose that the workstation 607 corresponds to one of the claimed plurality of external services, each of which provides a service for processing image data.

Moreover, each of the wholesale operations 604 provides only one service, as is distinct from the claimed plurality of services. Further, Sowinski is not seen to teach that, once the personalized setting information is acquired based on the identified operator, that setting screen, setting procedure, and contents are personalized and set and then transmitted to the external service, together with generated image data. Thus, Claims 1, 20 and 22 are not believed to be anticipated by Sowinski.

Tanaka is not seen to teach anything to overcome the foregoing deficiencies of Sowinski. In this regard, Tanaka is seen to teach a system for taking a photographic image of a person's face, transmitting the image to a destination that generates some type of photographic certificated (e.g., passport, student ID card, etc.), and then prints out the document for the user upon payment of a fee. However, Tanaka is not seen to teach the features of an image reading apparatus i) identifying an operator of the image reading apparatus, ii) acquiring personalized service information which is associated with and ID of the identified operator, the personalized service information including plural items of setting information for each of the plurality of external services, iii) personalizing a setting screen, a setting procedure, and contents of settings according to the acquired personalized service information, and iv) transmitting various settings which have been set based on the setting screen, setting procedure, and contents of the personalized settings, together with generated digital image data via a network to one of a plurality of external services which is selected by the identified operator.

Horikoshi is merely seen to disclose the use of an RFID system in which, when an RFID device that does not have access authorization passes through a portal gate, a tamper bit signal is changed. However, Horikoshi is not seen to teach anything that,

when combined with Sowinski and/or Tanaka, would have resulted in at least the features of an image reading apparatus i) identifying an operator of the image reading apparatus, ii) acquiring personalized service information which is associated with and ID of the identified operator, the personalized service information including plural items of setting information for each of the plurality of external services, iii) personalizing a setting screen, a setting procedure, and contents of settings according to the acquired personalized service information, and iv) transmitting various settings which have been set based on the setting screen, setting procedure, and contents of the personalized settings, together with generated digital image data via a network to one of a plurality of external services which is selected by the identified operator.

Shinici is merely seen to teach the use of personalized information for ordering a bookbinding service of a diary. However, Shinici is not seen to teach anything that, when combined with Sowinski, Tanaka and/or Horikoshi, would have resulted in the features of an image reading apparatus i) identifying an operator of the image reading apparatus, ii) acquiring personalized service information which is associated with and ID of the identified operator, the personalized service information including plural items of setting information for each of the plurality of external services, iii) personalizing a setting screen, a setting procedure, and contents of settings according to the acquired personalized service information, and iv) transmitting various settings which have been set based on the setting screen, setting procedure, and contents of the personalized settings, together with generated digital image data via a network to one of a plurality of external services which is selected by the identified operator.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, amended independent Claims 1, 20 and 22, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believe to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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